whole blood, packed RBCs [red blood cells], and plasma, as well as WBC [white blood cell] and platelet administration." The 2001 textbook *Emergency Care*, under "Composition of the Blood," stated: "The blood is made up of several components: plasma, red and white blood cells, and platelets." Thus, in line with medical facts, Witnesses refuse transfusions of whole blood or of any of its four primary components.

The medical article continued: "Witnesses' religious understanding does not absolutely prohibit the use of fractions such as albumin, immune globulins, and hemophiliac preparations; each Witness must decide individually if he can accept these." Since 1981, many fractions (breakdown elements derived from one of the four major components) have been isolated for use. Accordingly, *The Watchtower* of June 15, 2000, provided helpful information on the subject in the article "Questions From Readers." For the benefit of millions of current readers, the answer is reprinted on pages 29-31 of this magazine. It provides details and reasoning, yet you will see that what it says agrees with the basics presented in 1981.

12. (a) What position has been presented regarding fractions extracted from primary components of blood? (b) Where can additional information about this be found?

The Role of Your Conscience

13. Such information brings conscience to the fore. Why? Christians agree on the need to follow God's guidance, yet in some areas personal judgments must be made, and conscience comes into play. Conscience is the inherent ability to weigh and decide matters, often moral issues. (Romans 2:14, 15) You know, however, that consciences differ.* The Bible mentions that some have 'consciences that are weak,' implying that others' consciences are strong. (1 Corinthians 8: 12) Christians differ in the extent to which they have made progress in learning what God says, in being sensitive to his thinking, and in applying such to their decisions. We can illustrate this with the Jews and the eating of meat.

14. The Bible is clear that a person obedient to God would not eat unbleed meat. That was

* At one point, Paul and four other Christians went to the temple to cleanse themselves ceremonially. The Law was no longer valid, yet Paul acted on the advice of the older men in Jerusalem. (Acts 21:23-25) Still, some Christians may have felt that they would not go into the temple or go through such a procedure. Consciences differed back then, and they do today.

13, 14. (a) What is conscience, and how does it come into play regarding blood? (b) What guidance about eating meat did God provide for Israel, but what questions might have arisen?

15. How did the dietary laws of ancient Israel guide the eating of meat?